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ing of the human germ-plasm as if it were identical with the soul, and in confining all religion to purely human phenomena—as if God had nothing to do with the law of gravitation! But if Dr. Nicolai is too much of a specialist to be a complete philosopher, he is a man sufficiently large-minded and large-hearted to make his learning flow in broader and deeper channels than those of a special science.

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THE CRADLE OF THE WAR. By H. Charles Woods, F.R.G.S.  
Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

To Americans, if not to most Europeans, the Balkan question, so far as it has entered consciousness at all, has seemed a mysterious muddle—and with reason. How is one to see through a situation depending upon narrow national aims, romantic national aspirations, and bitter national jealousies—a question further complicated by doubtful racial considerations, and by intrigues, interferences, and hopelessly false “settlements” on the part of the great Powers. Turkey, an anachronism; Albania, a picturesque accident; Greece, a contradiction; Serbia, Roumania, Bulgaria, all nations stirred by that urge to a wider nationality which created the great states of the world—a medieval situation bottled up in a corner of modern Europe—what could be harder to understand—or more dangerous?

The Balkan peninsula was the cradle of the war; for though it did not produce the cause for the great conflict, it did supply the occasion. It was, and had been for a century before 1914, a hot-bed of potential wars. And, so far as one can see, it may easily continue to be just that.

The Balkan question, then, is of great importance, and now that America has become, in the true sense of the expression, a world Power it is for Americans to inform themselves about this problem.

In trying to inform oneself concerning the Balkan situation the beginning of wisdom lies, however, in realizing that in all probability no perfect solution of the problem exists. Ready-made formulas are of no use in dealing with so tangled a web of conditions. Either a good many of the old conditions must be swept quite away, or there must be a just and wise adjustment of conflicting interests.

Under these circumstances what one needs is facts rather than theories—not such facts as one can readily dig out of the encyclopedias and the history books, but the really significant facts known to few and understood by fewer. Facts of this sort, cautiously stated, carefully reasoned, are just what Mr. H. Charles Woods has given us in his latest book about the Balkans. In Mr. Woods's book there is a notable absence of political theorizing. The author speaks from a point of view at once geographical and political—in short from a scientific point of view. His, moreover, is the book of a man determined to understand all that can be understood about a complex and obscure matter. He has gathered his information very largely on the spot, and he has weighed and sifted his material in such a way as not so much to display new and attractive political patterns as to reveal glaringly the real difficulties of the situation as it existed prior to the world war.

After the Balkan wars, Serbia had gained enormously in territory and in prestige; and yet a mysterious gloom pervaded the whole country. Serbia had not obtained what she really wanted and needed, a port upon the Adriatic. But on the other hand, Austria-Hungary, the traditional enemy, quite as much as is Turkey, of Serbian aspirations, was almost as thoroughly discontented by the peace settlement. She had, indeed, prevented Serbia from getting an outlet upon the Adriatic, and she had "created" Albania, but she had not succeeded in preventing the establishment of a common frontier between Serbia and Montenegro—a common frontier sure to improve the relations between the two latter countries and to enhance Serbian prestige. Of course, the root of the matter lay in the old anomaly of the dual empire and in the intense national longings of the Serbs both in Serbia itself and in Austria-Hungary. No more paradoxical political situation, it would seem, has ever been brought to pass than that which placed a large population of Serbs and their kindred under Austrian control while it permitted the growth of a strong Serb state just to the south of Austria-Hungary.

For the Bulgarians the great war was not so much a world war as a third Balkan war. Their point of view was not admirable, yet in a cool retrospect it seems inevitable. "It is *impossible* but that offences should come!" Certain it was that the Bulgars "would not throw in their lot with any side or countries which did not promise to give them a large section of Southern Macedonia and also as a second consideration to restore to them a section of the Dobrudja and at least part of Turkish Thrace. In other words, the bitter antagonism felt by Bulgaria towards Serbia, Greece, and Roumania outweighed the traditional hostility towards Turkey and weakened the friendship with Russia." Turkey, moreover, had a strong hold upon Bulgaria's lines of communication with the sea. Under these circumstances it is no wonder that Allied diplomacy in the Balkans encountered difficulties. Behind England and France, Bulgaria saw the menace of Russia. And, besides, the Entente Allies were obliged, instead of negotiating for concessions, as Germany did, with one party—and that party, Turkey—to deal with Serbia, Greece, and Roumania—nations which would have been superlatively wise and self-denying if they had been willing to grant all that was asked of them.

Roumania hesitated long before plunging into the war on the right side; but decision of character was for Roumania, as she well knew, a rather expensive virtue. Because of her position that nation obviously could not afford to take sides either with Russia or with Austria-Hungary unless she were assured of the strongest support. But there was another aspect of the problem. She was open to attack from her southern neighbors—an attack all too likely to occur when occasion offered, in view of the events of 1913.

Greece, least glorious of the Balkan nations in the war, offers a wonderful study in the irony of political circumstances. It would be a diverting study to any person of sufficiently Olympic mind to smile over such things. In sum, one cannot discover that the majority of Greeks desired to enter the war upon either side; and one must admit that in this they were as reasonable as are the Dutch. It must be conceded that the King, though perhaps insincerely neutral,

had some reason on his side in not wishing to expose his country to attack from Bulgaria. It is clear that the majority of the Greeks were supporters of Venizelos, but that they were so because Venizelos favored the Allies does not appear. It cannot be said that the Allies, in taking the measures they did in Greece were supported by Greek popular sentiment or that their action can be justified by any form of purely nationalistic reasoning. In the larger view it is not apparent they would have been justified in taking any other course.

In a way, Greece, the would-be neutral, epitomizes the whole situation in the warlike Balkans. A certain medieval or ancient temper of mind, a certain narrowness of political view, seems to prevail. The larger world-view has been absent—just as it was in Russia after the revolution. Left to itself, one conjectures, the Balkan peoples would have worked out their political destinies on much the same principles as did the ancient Greeks. A succession of supremacies would have been the result, until some Philip of Macedon intervened. Bottled up and interfered with, the people of the Balkans were worse off than they would have been under ancient conditions. This much is clear: the disposition of great Powers to oppress and to encroach must be stamped out, and the parochialism of Balkan politics must be replaced by broader views. No "political" solution exists; the solution of the Balkan problem must be a moral solution. Let us hope that there is a spirit abroad capable of altering men's minds in both these ways.

Ancient Greece confronted the Persian Empire as the Balkan states confront the Ottoman Empire. In Turkey Tissaphernes and his fellow satraps still practise their treacheries—though under German direction. Into the obscure welter of Turkish politics Mr. Woods takes us as far as it is possible or perhaps profitable to go. The springs of Turkish intrigue are apparently not altogether discoverable to Europeans. That the key-note of Turkish policy has always been a longing to massacre foreigners is an opinion not wholly unjustifiable. But from a semi-internal point of view one can see the importance of Turkey's gradually improving relations with Bulgaria, and of the augmentation of German influence of Constantinople, and one can understand the futility of the negotiations between Europe and the Ottoman Government with reference to reforms for Armenia. Mr. Woods makes many matters clear in regard to Turkish policy and the diplomacy that shaped or attempted to shape that policy. What stands out most clearly is that Turkey has been to the Balkans not only a menace in the military sense but a moral evil.

Ancient Greece had its "problems" centering about small and seemingly unimportant territories or national groups. But ancient Greece never evolved anything quite so irrational as the Albanian problem. That a small territory should contain so many contradictions is almost beyond belief. Upon the miniature but important Albanian question Mr. Woods throws a much-needed light—a light both geographical and political.

Besides discussing with great thoroughness the political conditions of all the Balkan nations and the part played by each in the war, Mr. Woods discusses in separate chapters and with highly specialized knowledge the military highways of the Balkans, the Dardanelles

campaign, the operations near Salonika, the Bagdad Railroad, and the whole Mittel-Europa scheme. More than once he succeeds in showing the real reasons of things; many times he warns effectually against hasty judgments.

Mr. Woods has written a book of prime importance, a book that repays and rewards study. Its balanced and guarded conclusions will be found, on reflection, to be more illuminating by far than the quickly assimilated ideas of political essay-writers. Its facts are first-hand facts, and they are invaluable.

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FROM ISOLATION TO LEADERSHIP. By John Holladay Latané, professor of American History in the Johns Hopkins University. Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company.

In regard to the American policy of isolation there has been much misapprehension among Americans. It was against "permanent," not "entangling alliances" that Washington warned his countrymen and he did not discountenance temporary alliances to meet special needs. The policy of isolation he regarded, moreover, as itself a temporary expedient. Jefferson, who was the originator of the "entangling alliances" phrase, was on two separate occasions ready to make an alliance with England.

Indeed, it is probable, according to the view of Professor Latané, that neither Washington nor Jefferson "contemplated the possibility of the United States' shirking its responsibility as a member of the family of nations."

Part of the misapprehension regarding this matter has been due to a not unnatural confusion of the policy of isolation with the Monroe Doctrine. Since the latter policy implied a promise that we would keep our fingers out of the European pie, one might readily assume that we were debarred by it from taking any real part in world affairs; but to refrain from interference or aggression, is not the same thing as declining to do one's duty. As Professor Latané says, "there is neither logic nor justice in basing our right to uphold law and freedom in this hemisphere on our promise not to interfere with the violation of law and humanity in Europe."

Moreover, it is an error to suppose that the Monroe Doctrine has depended for its actual effect upon our policy of isolation. It has depended, in fact, upon the European balance of power. It was the approach of the Schleswig-Holstein war, as much as the traditional policy of the United States or its then formidable military force, which induced Louis Napoleon to withdraw Maximilian from Mexico. It was the foreboding of trouble in the Transvaal, rather than his "sense of humor," which caused Lord Salisbury to give way on the Venezuelan question. And it is only because England has, on the whole, favored the Monroe Doctrine, as a kind of open-door policy, that we have been able to maintain that doctrine at all.

Two conclusions, rather surprising to the ordinary reader, emerge from Professor Latané's discussion. The first is that "we have been so scrupulous in our efforts to keep out of political entanglements that we have sometimes failed to uphold principles of law in the validity